

OUTLOOK FOR THE 2008 MISSOURI SEASON

Expectations for the 2008-2009 waterfowl season in Missouri should be tempered somewhat by fewer total duck numbers, fewer young in the fall flight, and lower food abundance in Missouri due to spring and summer floods. Extensive flooding throughout Missouri during the 2008 growing season impacted the infrastructure on many MDC and private wetlands (Appendix F). In west Missouri, wetlands in the Osage and Grand River basins including Four Rivers CA, Schell-Osage CA, and Montrose CA flooded. In north-central Missouri, wetlands in the Grand River basin including Fountain Grove CA, and Swan Lake NWR flooded. Wetlands along the Mississippi River were the hardest hit; these included Ted Shanks CA, Columbia B.K. Leach CA, Columbia Bottom CA, and Ten Mile Pond CA. In Northwest Missouri, the Nodaway River flooded Nodaway Valley CA. Crops and moist-soil plants in wetlands along the Missouri River have been impacted by several rounds of high water with Eagle Bluffs experiencing the most challenges posed by high water. The impact of flooding on native wetland plant species and crops depends on the timing and duration of the flood events. A shortened navigation season on the Missouri River could affect water pumping capabilities at Bob Brown, Grand Pass, and Eagle Bluffs and other private wetlands located along the River. Compared to recent years, fewer crops will be available on some areas and the production of native wetland seeds will be dependent upon weather and precipitation during the remainder of the growing season. A late frost will allow additional time for moist-soil seeds and late planted crops to mature following receding floodwaters.

Regardless, hunters will once again have the opportunity to take advantage of a 16-day teal season, a 60-day duck season, late season Canada goose hunting, and the light goose Conservation Order. Season dates that bracket both early and late hunting preferences should provide hunters with a variety of hunting opportunities during the upcoming waterfowl season.